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Star 8/20/78 : earlier commentary on same subject to follow... M.V.

Kissinger plays fast and loose with the truth

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is having trouble telling the whole truth to the American press and people these days.

You'd have thought Kissinger was a prime suspect before a grand jury Sunday when a newsman asked him about efforts to push our Tanzanian ambassador, W. Beverly Carter Jr., out of the diplomatic service.

"To the best of my knowledge," said Kissinger, "and I am not always told every thing in the State Department, Ambassador Carter has not been transferred out of the State Department."

Now that is an outrageous Watergate-type evasion, for Kissinger instigated the moves to banish Carter, an unsung hero in saving the lives of four students who were kidnapped in Tanzania on May 19.

Kissinger knows that he personally instructed his closest State Department aide, Lawrence Eagleburger, to call Carter home and tell him that Kissinger didn't want him in the diplomatic service anymore. Kissinger knows that Eagleburger called James Keogh, director of the U.S. Information Service, and set up an appointment where Keogh and Carter could discuss the latter's return to a USA job.

Kissinger handed newsmen a batch of double-talk so he wouldn't have to admit that although President Ford had approved Carter's going to Denmark as ambassador, and the

Danish press had carried stories of Carter's assignment, Kissinger put the screws to this new assignment.

And in doing so, Kissinger angered some people in the White House. Donald Rumsfeld, the President's chief of staff, was caught in total unawareness of this display of Kissinger's vindictive arrogance.

Kissinger also knew that he had selected John Gunther Dean, most recently the U.S. ambassador to Cambodia, to get the Denmark post he was taking away from Carter.

It is still technically possible that Kissinger will realize the absurdity of his actions and permit Carter a worthy assignment or that President Ford will realize that Kissinger's monumental ego is a heavier political burden than he can carry into 1976, and that Carter will get that post in Denmark.

But they are saying in the State Department that "Kissinger is too much a Prussian ever to admit he was wrong about anything."

The whole mess arises from another Kissinger make-believe — the pretense that the U.S. never negotiates with or talks to terrorists or kidnappers. Kissinger's anger with Carter is that in making decisions which saved the lives of three Stanford University students and a Dutch woman, Carter let a sense of humanness cause

him to compromise the administration's policy.

Carter wasn't dealing with philosophy. He suddenly was confronted with two representatives of the kidnappers who walked in off the streets. With Carter were the parents and friends of the kidnap victims, pleading to be allowed to negotiate with the terrorists. The guerrillas had insisted that if Carter threw them out into the hands of Tanzanian police, the students would be killed immediately.

Under this pressure, Carter let the parents negotiate — and the students got out alive.

Is this the kind of "violation of policy" that justifies firing an ambassador? Only in the mind of someone who is overburdened by a "tough guy" complex.

But perhaps the most delicate aspect of Kissinger's behavior is his pretense that the U.S. government never ransoms or bails out American hostages. I reported earlier that the State Department transported the ransom money from London to Dar es Salaam in the diplomatic pouch. What I haven't told you is that Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere secretly released two political prisoners to save the lives of the American kids. President Ford then secretly wrote Nyerere offering "thanks for all you've done."

In his Vail, Colo., press conference, Kissinger admitted that the President had thanked Nyerere, add-

ing that "it is a matter of judgment as to how rigid those American kids die."

Against those facts, what kind of "open" and "honest" President can stand silent while Kissinger wrecks the career of Carter?

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to achieve the White House a vague sort of way mate. I do not begin to know what Richard Nixon's final gesture of named as vice president someone manifestly equipped to conduct the responsibilities of the office. I do mean to say this: Nixon were President today, a considerable